

AMENDMENTS**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Original) In a communications system apparatus with an Ethernet backplane and at least one internal occupant, a method for identifying internal occupants comprising:

verifying that a system switch processor ("SSP") has been assigned an IP address;

requesting a discovery protocol data package from said SSP;

determining whether said discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant; and

if said discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant, then discovering occupant information corresponding to said at least one internal occupant.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, including the additional act of determining whether said at least one internal occupant is the last internal occupant in said apparatus.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further including after said query of determining whether said discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant, the additional act of:

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determining whether said at least one internal occupant has a valid IP address, if the discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1 including the additional act of populating a data table with said at least one internal occupant's information.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the act of discovering occupant information corresponding to said at least one internal occupant further comprises:

determining whether said at least one internal occupant is a multiservice route processor;

discovering multiserver route processor information from said at least one internal occupant, if said at least one internal occupant is a multiservice route processor;

determining whether said at least one internal occupant is a system processing engine;

discovering system processing engine information from said at least one internal occupant, if said at least one internal occupant is a system processing engine; and

indicating an error for said at least one internal occupant if said at least one internal occupant is not a system processing engine.

6-11. (Withdrawn)

12. (Cancelled)
13. (Previously amended) A communications system apparatus comprising:
- an Ethernet backplane;
 - at least one internal occupant operatively coupled to said backplane;
- wherein said at least one internal apparatus occupant is configured to identify internal other occupants of said communications system wherein said at least one internal occupant is further configured to:
- verify that a system switch processor ("SSP") has been assigned an IP address;
 - request a discovery protocol data package from said SSP;
 - determine whether said discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant; and
 - discover occupant information corresponding to said at least one internal occupant if said discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant.
14. (Original) The communications system apparatus of Claim 13, wherein said at least one internal occupant is further configured to determine whether said at least one internal occupant is the last internal occupant in said apparatus.

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15. (Original) The communications system apparatus of Claim 13, wherein said at least one internal occupant is further configured to determine whether said at least one internal occupant has a valid IP address, if the discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant.

16. (Original) The communications system apparatus of Claim 13, wherein said at least one internal occupant is further configured to populate a data table with said at least one internal occupant's information.

17-18. (Withdrawn)

19. (Original) An apparatus for identifying internal occupants of a communications system apparatus with an Ethernet backplane and at least one internal occupant comprising:

means for verifying that a system switch processor ("SSP") has been assigned an IP address;

means for requesting a discovery protocol data package from said SSP;

means for determining whether said discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant; and

means for discovering occupant information corresponding to said at least one internal occupant, if said discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant.

20. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 19, further comprising the additional means for determining whether said at least one internal occupant is the last internal occupant in said apparatus.

21. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 19 further comprising the additional means for determining whether said at least one internal occupant has a valid IP address, if the discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant.

22. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 19 further comprising the additional means for populating a data table with said at least one internal occupant's information.

23-24. (Withdrawn)

25. (Original) A program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method for identifying internal occupants of a communications system apparatus with an Ethernet backplane and at least one internal occupant, said method comprising:

verifying that a system switch processor ("SSP") has been assigned an IP address;

requesting a discovery protocol data package from said SSP;

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determining whether said discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant; and

if said discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant, then discovering occupant information corresponding to said at least one internal occupant.

26. (Original) The program storage device of Claim 25, wherein said method includes the additional act of determining whether said at least one internal occupant is the last internal occupant in said apparatus.

27. (Original) The program storage device of Claim 25, wherein said method further includes after said query of determining whether said discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant, the additional act of:

determining whether said at least one internal occupant has a valid IP address, if the discovery protocol data package corresponds to said at least one internal occupant.

28. (Original) The program storage device of Claim 25, wherein said method includes the additional act of populating a data table with said at least one internal occupant's information.

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29. (Original) The program storage device of Claim 25, wherein said act of discovering occupant information corresponding to said at least one internal occupant further comprises:

determining whether said at least one internal occupant is a multiservice route processor;

discovering multiserver route processor information, if said at least one internal occupant is a multiservice route processor;

determining whether said at least one internal occupant is a system processing engine;

discovering system processing engine information from said at least one internal occupant, if said at least one internal occupant is a system processing engine; and

indicating an error for said at least one internal occupant if said at least one internal occupant is not a system processing engine.

30-35. (Withdrawn)